

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, October 8, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 8, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray using the words of Psalm 92:

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
To sing praises to Your name, O most high;
to declare Your steadfast love in the morn-
ing,

And Your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.

For you, O God, have made me
glad by Your work;

at the works of Your hands I sing for joy.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

U.S. NAVY AND MSC SEND AMERICAN SHIPYARDS JOBS OVERSEAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, for years in this Nation we have passed all kinds of laws and regulations to help protect American jobs and America's industrial base. Indeed, the U.S. military has long supported this assertion, and has been an integral part of maintaining a high level of readiness through the preservation and maintenance of a strong domestic industrial base. Along with this capacity comes the value and know-how of America's skilled work force.

In a day and age where the American skilled worker has sometimes become an endangered species, the Federal Government, in particular the Department of Defense, should try to preserve and defend these jobs. For 80 years these types of jobs were the backbone of the middle class in many communities throughout our country, including my home island of Guam.

Mr. Speaker, one would think that U.S. tax dollars would be spent here in this country to preserve this legacy. One would think that the Department of Defense would sooner spend these tax dollars here to preserve American jobs. But sadly, it seems that the U.S. military would rather spend these tax dollars in Japan or Korea or Singapore, to the loss of U.S. jobs.

Here is the outrageous truth, Mr. Speaker: The U.S. Navy and the Military Sealift Command annually send U.S. jobs overseas so they can save a few bucks. This is the truth. The MSC asks every year the Navy permission to have U.S.-flagged, U.S.-crewed, U.S.-owned and operated military ships to be repaired in foreign shipyards because it is cheaper.

We may ask ourselves, will lower costs to the Navy mean my tax dollars may go further? This is what the Navy and the MSC say. They tell me that they are cost-driven.

The fact is that foreign shipyards can always beat U.S. shipyards in terms of price for several reasons, primarily because foreign shipyards are subsidized by their central governments. Foreign shipyards do not have to pay their workers decent wages. Foreign shipyards do not have to comply with health and safe work environments.

We tried to solve this problem by an amendment that I introduced in the

104th Congress to title X which requires the Navy, including MSC, their vessels, to make sure that their ships are repaired in American shipyards. My amendment added Guam to that, because Guam is part of the United States.

But in recent years, the Navy has adopted a subterfuge in this. They have established an internal waiver policy that essentially defeats the congressional intent of title X, and the Navy has implemented a policy of not designating any home port for Military Sealift Commands, so they can undermine the intent of this law. This has resulted in the denial of Navy MSC work to Guam, Hawaiian, Alaskan, and Californian shipyards.

Mr. Speaker, this sham that the Navy and MSC purports will save money is a farce. It may save money, but at the cost of thousands of jobs. This will then increase reliance on unemployment insurance and welfare rolls, and further erode America's industrial capacity.

In summary, the Navy and MSC are doing two things. They are violating the congressional spirit and intent of the law to preserve jobs and save a few dollars. Two, they are handing U.S. shipyards jobs overseas.

I will be sending a Dear Colleague letter around to sign onto a letter to Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen to tell him that this practice is wrong, it is harmful to the national security of this Nation, and impedes readiness. I hope Members of this body will join me in this endeavor.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THE DINGELL-NORWOOD HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House of Representatives voted on different versions of health care reform. I believe that every one of our colleagues who spoke on this issue and voted on this issue had the best interests of patients in mind as they cast their votes.

There were two issues that were discussed this week in connection with health care reform and patient care. First, we passed legislation this week to increase the access of patients to health care insurance coverage. That was a very important effort that was

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.